

Arizona Invasive Species Advisory Council

Leadership and Coordination Working Group

Friday, September 14, 2007 Draft Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Aaron Olson (U of A; via teleconference)
Barron Orr (U of A Cooperative Extension; via teleconference)
Brian McGrew (ADA)
Cindy Copping (Ranching Community)
Doug Witte (AZ SLD)
Jeff Myers (ADA)
Joanne Roberts (AZ State Parks; via teleconference)
Larry Riley (AGFD)
Marianne Meding (AGFD)
Steve Yool (U of A; via teleconference)
Tom Klabunde (TNF)
Tonya Norwood Pearson (AACD)

Meeting Minutes:

Work Group Co-lead Doug Witte opened the Leadership and Coordination work group meeting located at the State Land Department Conference Room 321 located at 1616 W. Adams Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007 at 10:05 am.

Doug called for approval of the August 16 meeting minutes. Larry Riley motioned and Tonya Norwood-Pearson seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Doug Witte introduced Dr. Yool and Dr. Orr and asked Dr. Yool to give an overview of the goals of his course.

Dr. Yool created a seminar course (696c Physical Geography: Invasive Species)_ in response to the problems of controlling noxious weeds. The course was to cover a wide range of topics. Dr. Yool wanted to task grad students with trying to conceive what the necessary ingredients would be for a Center for Invasive Species. The students will be asked to develop from the ground up, a concept map for a center. He had students download the 2006 Report to the Governor and submit a critique on the report in order to get some background information. Dr. Yool would like to share some of the ideas around which the exercise is centered.

The central themes will include:

- Statewide center of partnership between the 3 universities and State Agencies, because there is time sensitivity to reacting to IS issues as they arise.
- Need of a management plan to link management and research together.
- Need to educate the next generation of scientists and managers – succession planning. So that there will be educated, informed individuals to continue to feed into the center.

Doug gave an overview of the process the Council is undertaking. He indicated the timeline and goal points for the Council work groups, with having a management plan delivered to the Governor by June, 2008. Doug invited Dr. Yool and his students to participate alongside with the Council as the Management Plan is developed. The work group has already identified 24-25 stakeholders that need to be coordinated among during this effort. The Coordination and Leadership issue is an important component that will guide the initial concept and development of the Center for Invasive Species.

Barron Orr commented that the report the class used the Executive 2007-07 order as a starting point. The Center will have some participants that are there because of common problems, and therefore it might be useful to look at other organizations, such as the Earth Science Information Partners Federation (ESIP) – a significant amount of work has gone into how these organizations connect in partnerships, etc. It was a recommendation from the National Academy to NASA. A second model is the National Phenology Network (NPN) – national coordinating office is housed at the U of A - Scientists and management agencies all across the Country. Their focus is on research where as the AISAC focus is likely to be on eradication and management. A regulatory approach is unlikely to succeed because the number of players because of the nature of the players. Examples: situations where key players on the ground pull away because the efforts won't be productive, and instead regulatory. Sometimes NRCS has a better relationship with a private entity than the Forest Service because they focus more on how to solve a problem rather than on how to regulate the entity.

Dr. Orr recommended that there are three functions a center could provide:

1. create roles for different types of groups and organizations to participate with the Center, this would allow for a flow of new ideas and information
2. have a clear interconnection of the research, management and education components of the Center, so that the information gathered can easily be transferred between groups
3. allow the Center to be seen as a non-regulatory organization, this would allow private landowners and others to provide input without the fear of retribution from the Center

Note: Need to keep in mind that the primary organizations providing the bulk of the funding are likely to be the State Agencies.

Dr. Orr stressed that participation will be a function of identifying how players can participate, what they can provide, and what they will get in return for their participation.

Doug indicated that the work group is encouraged and very interested in hearing what the graduate class will propose.

Dr. Yool commented that today's world is a virtual world and there is the hope to be able to move ahead with participation among State, Federal and NGO's. A Center concept should be open to partnerships with as many colleagues as possible. Dr. Yool expressed appreciation for the ability to coordinate with the Council.

There are currently 8 graduate students enrolled in the course.

There is a potential to have a work group meeting prior to one of the Dr. Yool's classes at U of A in Tucson. November 8th or November 15th were identified as possible dates for the work group to meet. By the 15th, the hope is to have concept maps generated: Lines of action, key resonating themes...other components. Doug asked if the students be able to present concepts on a seminar format on November 15th. Dr. Yool responded that they would, with great anticipation.

The work group decided to travel to Tucson on November 15th. Seating capacity is approximately 30 individuals. The group will invite the Research & Information work group as well.

Dr. Anne Lynch (entomologist) perhaps will be added to the experts list.

U of A no longer on teleconference.

Doug asked for comments on work group.

The work group needs to attend the November 15th U of A seminar with a decided upon position of how the center will look and operate. The first two work group reports will already have been available for public review. However, the overall endorsement from the Council will likely not happen until around March.

Perhaps there needs to be a separate work group charter that addresses the concept of a Center for Invasive Species. The range of alternatives should be presented (i.e. physical, virtual, roles, etc.) and let the Council and the Governor make the decisions.

The work group should take a look at the two groups that Dr. Orr mentioned (ESIP & NPN) as well as take a look at the Water Resources Institute. There will be varying views of what the Council should look like (majority governmental to majority private), and varying expectations of what it should provide (hands on to more of a supportive role).

If there are several alternatives, it should be the Council's responsibility to rank the alternatives and present them to the Governor.

There will be varying issues that need to be weighed. Financing; Psychological approach: "If I come to the table, what do I have to contribute, and what will I gain?"

The 2006 report put a lot of responsibilities on to the Center. Perhaps alternative approaches will allow the Council to weigh the pros and cons and then identify the model that will best meet the needs identified for the Council.

Ultimately the land manager cannot give up their authorities. The issue is that coordination needs to happen. In the control & management section, the work group will need to review management agreements and remedy possible conflicts.

The group again discussed that the focus of the graduate class is truly on research and developing a “U of A” Center for Invasive Species. So the work group needs to keep this in mind when considering what the students put forth. However, the possibility of identifying some ideas and concepts resulting from “out of the box” thought process could be very helpful to the work group. There will likely be several ideas of value that could influence the Council.

Note: Need to step away from identifying the Center as a goal and better focus on what the end points need to be. Need to be thinking of the center as a tool. Need to identify what the functions and processes need to be and then determine if the Center could be a useful tool of how to get those functions done.

Group looking at updated copy of template from Doug. Group decided to address charter objectives not yet discussed.

The management plan should include the list the organizations that participate in research activities identified in the first group meeting. One of the goals could be to provide the directory as a deliverable. The Work Group could include this list as a sidebar or in an appendix. Don’t worry about moving forward with the Directory until the Council accepts the recommendation. The Directory will be an outcome following the management plan. Who should be responsible for housing and maintaining the database? Need to get endorsement from the Council. Will this be maintained online? Webpage? Hard Copy?

Invasive Plant Management in the Sonoran Desert- Resource guide is a starting point, it contains a published resource guide for invasive species – 2002.

Back to the Center for Invasive Species – Objective 4

Suggestions for Functions that a Center for Invasive Species could perform include:

- Should have directory of all stakeholders, government agencies involved, and research contributors.
- Central point to go for information, place to house/send grey literature, peer review materials – library and/or virtual library
- Produce news letter
- Maintain home page web site
- House a database of technical information regarding invasive species
- Establish monitoring and identification protocols so that dispersed groups could collect data in the same manner and speak in the same language
- A tool for sending out information and updates on hot topics
- Point for local groups to look for funding sources, or find out where to find funding
- What will the cut-off be between invasive species and disease? Should we be more worried about invasive species as vectors?
- Resources for identification: List of invasive species and information about them (like ANS with the different aquatic nuisance species)

- Identification of experts – how do I get confirmation about how to find out if a species is what I think it is and how do I get a sample to the center?
- The public should be able to go to the website to get basic information

The group discussed whether to broadly address the functions that a Center could fulfill and came up with the following:

- Information
- Education
- Coordination
- Resources (money, expertise)
- Outreach

There is a need to better identify the function and roles to get a better idea of how to develop “Leadership and Coordination” and to estimate what it will cost to maintain such an organization. The group may need to better define the broad functional areas in order to adequately assess cost. With or without a center these elements need to be addressed.

The question that needs to be asked is where does “Leadership and Coordination” fit in? How will we use the tool?

Develop a regional effort to provide leadership for regional and local management. The Center could provide leadership by providing guidance to groups.

Charter Objective 5

Research & Information Management

Center could range from playing a coordination role, or to the place where operations would happen. The Center will be a clearinghouse for research already done, tasking out research, determining research needs and priorities. Maybe the Center should provide a source of information as to what data is in existence, who has it and what format it's in.

- Protocols: Storage, terminology → collaborative between universities and managers (state agencies)
- Monitor existing and past research
- Identify research needs and priorities
- Identify action priorities based on research (risk assessment component)
- Database, mapping, definitions – need to define database and mapping standards. The center can provide guidance on how this could happen. Could be the home for a database, but not necessarily. Economy of scale – serve a lot of folks in a lot of different places at a lot of different levels.
- Alternatives for database
 - Give entirely to university
 - Collaboration among agencies
 - Would require an expertise...interoperability with a minimum set of acceptable protocols or standards. Have a database fed from several different areas, and also

sharing information. The collaborative component is an agreement to use it as a central database.

- Provide a guide map about what information is out there and where to go to get it. Takes out the jurisdictional elements of the land manager.
- Providing species biology updates

What should we be on the lookout for? Who is responsible for this? The Council or a Center? There needs to be a review of invasive species lists. There was direction to have a comprehensive list of invasive species.

Anticipation & Outreach

- Maintain a watch list, and provide information and steps to act if one of these species is detected
- Monitoring – activities in adjacent states, e.g. quagga mussels, cactus moth, etc.
- Risk assessment
- Informing
- Noticing, informing the public
- Education
- If the watch list changes, risk assessments needs to be initiated
- Marketing – raising awareness of the issue (case study: Stop Aquatic Hitch Hikers)
- Awareness – help maintain consistent messages about invasive messages and provide consistent information (quality control)

Control and Management

- Organize community efforts
- Organize and identify local resources available
- Could provide technical information on recommended treatments, treatment alternatives, biological, chemical, mechanical
- Cross-jurisdictional coordination
- Mediation between agencies where regulatory issues may arise
- Initiation point for incident response team coordination

Funding

Get the players to the table, will be a cost benefit for those players. The bulk of the funding may go to the database. Need to present to the council as a set of alternatives.

Recommendation: Funding needs to be stable, predictable and sustainability, and obtainable.

- Sponsoring Agency contributions.
- Legislative support.
- Tax strategies (breaks/incentives, new taxation, etc.)
- Developers and landscaping incentives/fees that could support a center (more relevant to counties and municipalities than the state) raising fees = raising property taxes
- Reid Bill
- Borderlands legislation – more specific to federal lands

- Montana – if you didn't undertake measures to reduce fire hazards around your house, then response was appropriate in regards to that increased risk = increased hazard = increased premium
- ANS grants – federal matching grants program for implementation
- Collaborative financing among partners – core state agencies need to collaborate and contribute. Could be among state, federal, local agencies. Could even be among States. Could request that every state buys in.
- Charge for products/services

Delivery mechanism would be how?

Broadly lay out the Alternatives (Barns & Nobles vs. Amazon.com)

Structural vs. Virtual

There would be specific financing strategies that could go with these alternatives.

At the end of the day, it will fall heavily on the State Agencies.

People are addressing invasive species in different manners and accessing different funding sources.

There are already people addressing many of the needs outlined earlier. What needs to be done is find a coordination mechanism among all of those parties, and this coordination may be provided through a Center. Therefore the financing for a Center really needs to be in the form of personnel costs.

Explore with Western Governors whether this kind of tool could be developed on a regional basis.

Charter Objective 5e. Identify Players

Need to have long term standing of the work groups to make sure that strategic issues are reviewed and promote coordination among the universities and other research organizations.

Outreach and awareness an extension function

Risk assessment to agencies and universities

Cross jurisdictional coordination – comes down to who has authority

Still need to address:

Action Plan

Directory

Coordination with stakeholders – need to develop a mechanism for coordination.

What is the organization within the state to promote coordinated action?

Review of regulatory authority on some frequency

How to deploy concept of coordination?

Discuss Cindy's flow chart.

Brian, Jeffrey and Doug and Cindy will meet on Monday the 17th to meet and start filling in the action/implementation plan.

By Friday the 21st, will have a draft available to send to group members and Council members to review and provide comment.

Next meeting Monday September 24th 10 am, SLD
Doug will let Marianne know about conference room availability.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm